

Culture Minister David Lammy unveils the UK's next three nominations for world heritage status.

The Antonine Wall, the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and the Twin Monastery of Wearmouth and Jarrow have been chosen as the UK's next three nominations to become World Heritage Sites, Culture Minister David Lammy announced today.

This means that, if accepted by UNESCO, the three sites will join the Tower of London, Blenheim Palace and Stonehenge on the list of 27 UK World Heritage Sites.

The Antonine Wall was built by the Roman army on the orders of the Emperor Antoninus Pius following the successful reconquest of southern Scotland in A.D. 142.

For a generation from 142AD to about 165AD the Antonine Wall was the north-west frontier of the Roman Empire.

The Antonine Wall was added to the UK Tentative List this year and would form an extension to the Frontiers of the Roman Empire Transnational World Heritage Site presently consisting of Hadrian's Wall and the Upper Raetian German Limes.

The Pontcysyllte Aqueduct is one of the world's most renowned and spectacular achievements of waterways engineering. Built as part of the improvement of transport to provide the arteries of industrialisation, the structure was a pioneer of cast iron construction and was the highest canal aqueduct ever built.

As such, it is one of the heroic monuments which symbolise the world's first Industrial Revolution and its transformation of technology.

The twin Anglo-Saxon monastery at Wearmouth and Jarrow - 'one monastery in two places' - was the creation of one man, Benedict Biscop, who travelled abroad extensively (to Rome and elsewhere) from in the 650s on and had returned determined to build a monastery 'in the Roman manner'.

The first historian of the English people, Bede, was a member of the community from the age of seven, having been entrusted to Benedict Biscop c. 680.

Culture Minister, David Lammy, said: "Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape has just been successfully inscribed to become the 27th UK World Heritage Site.

Earlier this year we put forward Darwin at Downe as the UK's 2006 nomination for consideration in 2007. We now need to turn our attention to the running order of nominations for 2007 and beyond.

"I am extremely pleased with the nominations for 2007 to 2009. The Antonine Wall will be an important addition to the existing Frontiers of the Roman Empire World Heritage site.

Pontcysyllte Aqueduct is world known and an impressive example of waterways engineering in the late 18th century. And the twin Anglo Saxon monastery at Wearmouth and Jarrow are a historic legacy of Benedict Biscop's vision in the seventh century which produced Bede, the greatest scholar of his day, who shaped European thought."

Sir Neil Cossons, Chairman of English Heritage, said: "The nomination for Wearmouth-Jarrow recognises the unique international contribution the site and its greatest inhabitant, the Anglo-Saxon scholar Bede, made to the development of European learning and culture.

The inscription of the Antonine Wall will complement the recent joining of the Upper German-Raetian Limes and Hadrian's Wall to form the Frontiers of the Roman Empire World Heritage Site and will strengthen international cooperation on conservation."

Patricia Ferguson MSP, Minister for Tourism, Culture and Sport, said: "The Antonine Wall is an outstanding international archaeological treasure. This touch of Roman civilisation in central Scotland is a reminder of the many European links our country has and this bid for World Heritage Site status is widely supported, not just in Scotland and the UK, but by other countries that share this heritage.

"Scotland already boasts three cultural heritage sites - The Old and New Towns of Edinburgh, The Heart of Neolithic Orkney and New Lanark - and St Kilda, which is one of only a handful of World Heritage Sites recognised for both its cultural and natural importance.

The Antonine Wall would be a worthy addition." Alun Pugh, Minister for Culture, Welsh Language and Sport, said: "I very much welcome the nomination of the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct as a World Heritage Site. We have a wonderful built historic environment in Wales and, having been over the Aqueduct both on foot and by boat, I can safely say that the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct is a jewel in the crown.

The Aqueduct represents a great historical resource for Wrexham and North East Wales and gaining World Heritage Status would be of great value to the local community as well as a real coup for the tourism profile of the area."

The nomination documents for the three nominations, which formally outline the case for its inscription as a World Heritage Site, are being prepared.

These nominations, together with those from other countries, will be submitted to UNESCO in February 2007, 2008 and 2009.

Over the following 18 months, after submission to UNESCO, the nomination will be assessed by expert advisers to the World Heritage Committee. Final decisions will be made by the World Heritage Committee at its annual meeting in the following summer.

The UK's World Heritage Sites are currently:

Cultural

Ironbridge Gorge

Stonehenge, Avebury & Associated Sites

Durham Castle & Cathedral

Studley Royal Park including the Ruins of Fountains Abbey

Castles & Town Walls of King Edward in Gwynedd

Blenheim Palace

City of Bath

Hadrian's Wall

Westminster Palace, Westminster Abbey & St Margaret's Church

Tower of London

Canterbury Cathedral, St Augustine's Abbey & St Martin's Church

Old and New Towns of Edinburgh

Maritime Greenwich

Heart of Neolithic Orkney

The Historic Town of St George & related Fortifications, Bermuda

Blaenavon Industrial Landscape

Derwent Valley Mills

Saltaire

New Lanark

Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

Liverpool Maritime Mercantile City

Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape

Natural

Giant's Causeway

St Kilda (dual Natural and Cultural site)

Henderson Island

Gough and Inaccessible Islands

Dorset and East Devon Coast

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